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Dated: May 21, 1999.

Thomas L. Bryant,

Associate General Counsel.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of The Army

Army Science Board Notice of Partially Closed Meeting

In accordance with section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), announcement is made of the following Committee Meeting:

Name of Committee: Army Science Board (ASB).

Date of Meeting: 9 & 10 June 1999.

Time of Meeting: 0800-1700 (both days).

Place: Arlington, VA.

Agenda: The Army Science Board's (ASB) Summer Study panel on "Full Spectrum Protection for 2025-Era Ground Platforms" will meet for briefings and discussions. These meetings will be partially open to the public. Any interested person may attend, appear before, or file statements with the committee at the time and manner permitted by the committee. The classified portions of these meetings will be closed to the public in accordance with Section 552b(c) of Title 5, U.S.C., specifically subparagraph (1) thereof, and Title 5, U.S.C., Appendix 2, subsection 10(d). For further information, please contact the Army Science Board at (703) 604-7479.

Wayne Joyner,

Program Support Manager, Army Science Board.

[FR Doc. 99-13521 Filed 5-26-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Navy

Record of Decision for Increased Flight and Related Operations in the Patuxent River Complex, Patuxent River, MD

AGENCY: Department of the Navy, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Notice of record of decision.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Navy, after carefully considering the operational and environmental consequences, announces its decision to increase flight and related operations in test areas comprising the Patuxent River Complex, MD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Elleen Kane, NAS Patuxent River Public

Affairs, 2268 Cedar Point Road, Bldg 409, Patuxent River, MD 20670, telephone 301-342-7710.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The text of the entire Record of Decision (ROD) is provided as follows:

The Department of the Navy (DON), pursuant to Section 102(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. Section 4331 et seq.) and regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) that implement NEPA procedures (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), hereby announces its decision to increase flight and related operations in test areas comprising the Patuxent River Complex, MD as set forth in Operational Workload III, which is identified as Preferred Alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Operational Workload Alternative III provides for up to 24,400 flight hours per year, including up to 21,100 annual flight hours for research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E) activities and related support, and up to 3,300 annual flight hours of military training support. Non-flight and laboratory test activities will operate at levels proportional to the increase in flight operations. This level of future operations is based on foreseeable mission requirements and the complex's unique airfield, facility, and range capabilities. As a result, the complex will have the flexibility to accept new and variable workloads, thereby increasing efficiencies and lowering costs to users.

The test areas involved are under the exclusive control and scheduling authority of the Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division (NAWCAD). They include Naval Air Station (NAS) Patuxent River (with all its flight and ground test facilities, runways, and associated airspace); Outlying Field (OLF) Webster Field (with its flight test facilities, runways, and associated airspace); and the Chesapeake Test Range (CTR) (including its restricted airspace, aerial and surface firing range, and Hooper, Hannibal, and Tangier Island targets). Combined, these test areas are identified as the Patuxent River Complex.

Implementation of the action will be phased in as needed to support additional workloads beginning in mid-1999.

Process

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS for increased flight and related operations in the Patuxent River Complex was published in the **Federal Register** on April 1, 1997, and in local and regional newspapers twice, one and

three weeks prior to the scoping meetings. Five public scoping meetings were held between May 6 and May 15, of 1997 in Prince Frederick, MD; Leonardtown, MD; Burgess, VA; Crisfield, MD; and Cambridge, MD. Comments received during the public scoping meetings were considered in the preparation of the Draft EIS (DEIS).

A Notice of Availability (NOA) for the DEIS was published in the **Federal Register** on May 15, 1998 and in local and regional newspapers twice, one and three weeks prior to the scheduled hearing dates. Public hearings were held June 10 through June 22 of 1998, in Lusby, MD; Cambridge, MD; Heathsville, VA; and Great Mills, MD. The DON received 330 comments on the DEIS from 2 Congressmen, 4 federal agencies, 17 state agencies, 2 regional agencies, 6 local governments, 11 non-governmental organizations, and 93 private citizens. All verbal and written comments are addressed in Chapter 10 of the FEIS.

The NOA for the FEIS was published in the **Federal Register** on December 18, 1998. Public notices and news releases noting the availability of the FEIS were published in local and regional newspapers the following week. Copies of the FEIS and DEIS are available for public review in 18 repositories around Chesapeake Bay and will continue to be available for 60 days following the signing of this Record of Decision. The DON received 29 public comments on the FEIS during the 30-day public comment period.

Alternatives Considered

The three alternatives considered in this FEIS focus on the efficient use of existing facilities and personnel in the Patuxent River Complex and provide for the continuation of and increase in RDT&E flight operations and non-flight laboratory activities, and additional support for military training activities. The preferred alternative (Operational Workload Alternative III) could accommodate up to 24,400 flight hours per year. Operational Workload Alternatives I and II could accommodate up to 20,700 and 22,600 flight hours per year, respectively. Implementation of any alternative will: (1) Maintain existing boundaries of the special use airspace and restricted surface areas in the CTR; (2) continue airfield daily operating hours at current, or slightly modified operating hours; (3) require no additional permanent and transient employees at NAS Patuxent River and OLF Webster Field or construction of major new facilities beyond those constructed as a result of previous Base